His Majesties

Most Gracious

SPEECH,

Together with the

Lord Chancellors,

To both Houses of

PARLIAMENT,

On *Thursday* the 6th of *March* 167$\frac{8}{9}$.

By His Majesties special Command.

LONDON,

Printed by *John Bill*, *Christopher Barker*, *Thomas Newcomb*, and *Henry Hills*, Printers to the Kings most Excellent Majesty, 167$\frac{8}{9}$.

His Majesties

Most Gracious

SPEECH

To both Houses of

PARLIAMENT,

My Lords and Gentlemen,

I Meet you here with the most earnest desire that Man can have, to unite the minds of all My Subjects, both to Me, and to one another, and I resolve it shall be your Faults, if the Success be not suitable to My desires; I have done many great things already in order to that End; as the Exclusion of the Popish Lords from their Seats in Parliament, the Execution of several men, both upon the score of the Plot,

and of the Murder of Sir Edmondberry Godfrey; *and it is apparent that I have not been idle in Prosecuting the Discovery of both, as much further as hath been possible in so short a time.*

I have Disbanded as much of the Army as I could get Money to do, and I am ready to Disband the rest so soon as you shall Reimburse what they have cost Me, and will inable me to Pay off the remainder: And above all, I have Commanded My Brother to absent himself from Me, because I would not leave the most malicious Men room to say, I had not removed all Causes which could be pretended to influence Me towards Popish Counsels.

Besides that end of Union which I aim at (and which I wish could be extended to Protestants abroad as well as at home) I propose by this last great Step I have made, to discern whether Protestant Religion, and the Peace of the Kingdom be as truly aimed at by others, as they are really intended by Me; For if they be, You will imploy your time upon the great Concerns of the Nation, and not be drawn to promote

mote private Animosities under pretences of the Publique; Your Proceedings will be calm and peaceable in order to those good Ends I have recommended to you, and you will Curb the Motions of any unruly Spirits which would endeavour to disturb them. I hope there will be none such amongst you, because there can be no man that must not see how fatal Differences amongst our Selves are like to be at this time both at home and abroad.

I shall not cease my Endeavours dairly to find out what more I can, both of the Plot, and Murder of Sir Edmondberry Godfrey, and shall desire the Assistance of both My Houses in that Work.

I have not been wanting to give Orders for putting all the present Laws in Execution against Papists, and I am ready to join in the making such further Laws as may be necessary for Securing of the Kingdom against Popery.

I must desire your Assistance also in Supplies, both for Disbanding the Army (as I have already told you) and for Paying that part of the Fleet which

have been Provided for by Parliament but in the Fifth of June last, as also that Debt for Stores, which was occasioned by the Poll-Bills falling short of the Sum which that Act gave Credit for.

I must necessarily recommend to you likewise the Discharging of those Anticipations which are upon my Revenue, and which I have Commanded to be laid before you, and I have just cause to desire such an Increase of the Revenue it self, as might make it equal to My necessary Expences; but by reason of those other Supplies which are absolutely necessary at this time, I am contented to struggle with that Difficulty a while longer, expecting for the present only to have the Additional Duties upon Customs and Excise to be prolonged to Me, and that you will some way make up the Loss I sustain by the Prohibition of French Wines *and* Brandy, *which turns only to My prejudice, and to the great advantage of the* French.

I must needs put you in mind how necessary it will be to have a good Strength at Sea this Summer, since

Our

Our Neighbours are making Naval Preparations; And notwithstanding the great Difficulties I labour under, I have taken such Care as will prevent any Danger which can threaten Us, if your Parts be performed in time.

And I do heartily recommend to you, That such a constant Establishment might be made for the Navy, as might make this Kingdom not onely Safe, but Formidable, which can never be whilst there remains not enough besides to pay the necessary Charges of the Crown.

I will conclude as I begun, with my earnest desires to have this an Healing Parliament, and I do give you this Assurance, That I will with My Life Defend both the Protestant Religion, and the Laws of this Kingdom, and I do expect from you to be Defended from the Calumny, as well as Danger of those worst of men, who endeavour to render Me and My Government odious to My People.

The rest I leave to the Lord Chancellor.

THE

THE

THE Lord Chancellors SPEECH To both Houses of PARLIAMENT,

My Lords, and you the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesses of the House of Commons,

YOu are here Assembled by vertue of His Majesties most Gracious Writs of Summons to hold a Parliament, The Great, The Wise, and the Powerful Councel of this Kingdom; From the Wisdom of this Councel The King is sure He shall receive the Best Advice, From the Duty and Loyalty of this Assembly He can never want a Cheerful Assistance, And the King Resolves to Meet You All with so much Grace and Goodness, that He hopes this Parliament shall End in no Disappointment of Any, but our Enemies.

It may seem strange perhaps to some, That His Majesty who had so long and large an Experience of the Duty of the last Parliament, should now, and in this present Conjuncture, think fit to call a New one; But the King hath so Equal a Confidence in the Affections of All His good Subjects, that He intends to be Acquainted with them All, and to have many and frequent Consultations with them, And hopes by this means to Ob-

tain first a true and right Understanding of the Desires of his People; and next to that, to be rightly Understood by them.

The Considerations which are now to be laid before you are as Urgent and as Weighty as were ever yet Offer'd to any Parliament, or indeed ever can be, So Great and so Surprizing have been our Dangers at Home, So Formidable are the Appearances of Danger from abroad, That the most United Counsels, The most Sedate and the Calmest Temper, together with the most dutiful and zealous Affections that a Parliament can Shew, are all become absolutely and indispensably Necessary for Our Preservation.

At Home we had need look about us, for His Majesties Royal Person hath been in Danger by a Conspiracy against his Sacred Life, Diabolically contriv'd, and Industriously carried on by those Seminary Priests and Jesuits and their Adherents, who think themselves under some Obligation of Conscience to Effect it, And having Vow'd the Subversion of the True Religion amongst Us, find no Way so likely to Compass it, as to Wound us in the Head, and to Kill the Defender of the Faith.

His Majesty wanted not sufficient Evidence of His Zeal for Our Religion, without this Testimony from His Enemies, who were about to Sacrifice Him for it; But it hath ever been the Practice of those Votaries, first to Murder the Fame of Princes, and then their Persons, First to Slander them to their People as if they favour'd Papists, and then to Assassinate them for being too Zealous Protestants. And thus by All the ways and Means which Our Law calls Treason, and

their

their Divinity calls Merit and Martyrdom. They are trying to Set up the Dominion and the Supremacy of the Pope, as if the Dignity of His Triple Crown could never be sufficiently Advanced, unless these three Kingdoms were added unto Him, and all brought back again under that yoke, which neither we nor our Forefathers were able to bear.

The Enquiry into this Conspiracy hath been closely pursued, and the Lords of the Counsel have been careful to Prosecute the Discovery ever since the Rising of the last Parliament, and the King doth now Recommend it to you to perfect. More Evidence hath been already found out, and more Malefactors discover'd, some in Hold, some Fled, Justices of Peace have been Quicken'd in the Execution of their Duty, the Negligent have been Reprov'd and Punish'd, the Diligent encourag'd and assisted in Doubtful Cases by the Opinions of the Judges. Active and faithful Messengers have been sent into all the Corners of the Kingdom, where there was any hope of Service to be done. The very Prisons have been search'd, to see whether any had fled thither to hide themselves there, and under pretence of Debt to escape the pursuit. And if any have desir'd leave to go beyond Sea, they have first given Security not to go to *Rome*, nor send their Children to be bred in any Foreign Seminaries, and then they have been obliged to give in a List of all their Menial Servants, and those Servants too have been examin'd upon Oath: And Order is given that they be again Examin'd at the Ports, and make Oath they are the same persons were Examin'd above. So that all possible Care hath been taken that no Malefactors might Escape us in Disguise.

And though the Priests themselves do not keep the Confessions of their Proselytes more secret then these keep the Injunctions of their Priests, Yet enough hath appear'd to bring some Capital Offendors to publick Justice, and to Convict them of the Crime, Some of the Traitors have bin Executed, Several Priests have been Arrested and imprison'd, all are hiding themselves and Lurking in secret Corners like the Sons of Darkness. The Murderers of Sir *Edmond-bery Godfrey* have been condemn'd and suffer'd Death, Some Papists have Banisht themselves out of the Kingdom, others are imprison'd for not taking the Oaths, All are prosecuted towards Conviction, And the very Shame and Reproach which attends such abominable Practises, hath cover'd so many Faces with New and Strange Confusions, that it hath prov'd a Powerful Argument for their Conversion, nor is it to be wonder'd at that they could no longer believe All that to be Gospel which their Priests taught them, when they saw the way and means of introducing it was so far from being Evangelical.

In a word, So universal is that Despair to which the Papists are now reduced, that they have no other hopes left but this, That We may Chance to Overdoe our own Business, and by being too far transported with the fears of Popery, neglect the Opportunities We now have of making Sober and Lasting Provisions against it.

And 'tis not to be Doubted but that it would infinitely gratifie the Papists in the Revenge they wish, for this Discovery, if they could see Us Distracted with Jealousies incurable, and Distrusting the Government to such a Degree

as should Weaken all that Reverence by which it stands; For then the Plot would not be altogether without Effect, but those whom they could not Destroy by their Conspiracy, they should have the Satisfaction to see Ruining themselves after the Discovery, So that though We had Escapt that Desolation which they intended to have brought upon us, Nothing could save us from that Destruction which We should bring upon Our selves.

But their Expectations of this are as Vain, as their other Designs were Wicked, For His Majesty hath already begun to let them See with what Severity he intends to Proceed against them, He hath pass'd a Law to Disable All the Nobility and Gentry of that Faction ever to Sit in Parliament, And not content with that, He did Offer to the Last Parliament, and do's again renew the same Offer to this Parliament, to Pass any further Laws against Popery which shall be desired, So as the same Extend not to the Diminution of His own Prerogative, nor to alter the Descent of the Crown in the Right Line, nor to Defeat the Succession. He hath refus'd the Petition of the Lords who during the Interval of Parliament desired to be brought to their Trial, and after so long an Imprisonment might reasonably enough have expected it. But His Majesty thought it fitter to reserve them to a more Publique and Conspicuous Trial in Parliament. For which cause their Trial ought now to be Hasten'd, for it is high time there should be some period put to the Imprisonment of the Lords.

But that which the King hath been pleas'd to mention to you this morning Surpasses all

the rest, that is sufficient of it self, and to Discharge all those fears of Popish Influence, which many good men had too far Entertain'd. Ego now you see His Majesty of His own Accord hath done that which would have been very difficult for you to Ask, and has deprived Himself of the Conversation of His Royal and Only Brother, by commanding Him to Depart the Kingdom, to which Command His Royal Highness hath paid a most Humble and Obedient Submission and Obedience. This Separation was attended with a more then ordinary Sorrow on both sides. But He that for Your sakes could part with such a Brother and such a Friend, you may be sure hath now no Favorite but His People. Since therefore His Majesty hath shewn so much readiness to Concurr with, and in a manner to Prevent the Desires of His Parliament, 'Tis a miserable Refuge Our Enemies must to, when they hope to see our Zeal ruin our Discretion, and that We Our Selves should become the unhappy Occasion of making Our own Counsels Abortive.

Not only the Care of the State, but the Care We ought to have of the Church too, will preserve us from all Errors of this Kind, For as there neither is, nor hath been these fifteen hundred years, a Purer Church then Ours, So 'tis for the sake of this poor Church alone that the State hath been so much disturb'd. It is Her Truth and Peace, Her Decency and Order which they Labour to Undermine, and pursue with so Restless a Malice. And since they do so, it will be necessary for Us to Distinguish between Popish and other Recusants, between them that would Destroy the whole Flock, and them that only

wander

wander from it. And amongst the many good Laws You shall think fit to provide, it may not be amiss to think of some better Remedy for Regulating the Press, from whence there daily Steal forth Popish Catechisms, Psalters, and Books of Controverse. And it may be another good fruit of such a Law to hinder Schismatical and Seditious Libels too: for certainly it were much better for us to make such Laws as will prevent Offences, rather then such as serve only to punish the Offenders.

From the Dangers which we know at Home, and have already in a great measure Overcome, Be pleas'd to carry your Considerations abroad, and Weigh the Dangers which may come from thence. We all see and know the Posture of Our Neighbours, and that the General Peace of Europe being once made, there must needs be Great Fleets and Armies unemploy'd, and ready for an Occasion. And 'tis as visible that some of our Neighbours are so Wasted by the War, that they are unable to give Us any help, if We should stand in need of it. And when We consider what all the Afflicted Condition of the Protestants abroad, We may be sure that every Calamity they suffer, is in some measure a Weakning of the Protestant Interest, and looks as if it were intended to make Way for a General Extirpation.

These Dangers would not be so considerable as they are, if the present Wants of the Crown were not too well known. The King doth not intend to press you at this Time with the full Consideration of them All, for as the King cannot hope in any One Session to do All that may be good for His People, so neither does He expect from them All that may be Necessary for Himself, But hopes the

the good understanding between Him and His People, shall be for ever maintain'd, by a Perpetual Reciprocation of Grace and Favour on His part, and Duty and Affection on Yours.

That which doth most press the King at Present, is the Want of that Treasure which He hath Exhausted by going as far as He could in the Disbanding of His Army, which is very much, but not fully done. The Charge of a Great Fleet at Sea now ready to be paid off after a long Service, and the Necessity of Setting out another this Summer. The Defects of the Poll-Bill, which fell short of that Sum which was allow'd to be borrow'd upon it, and by that means hath deceiv'd those who did furnish Stores upon the Credit of that Act, unless you relieve them. Together with the Continuation of some Additional Duties of Custom and Excise. And it were much to be wish'd, That since the Revenue at the best was always short of the Necessary Charge of the Government, A way might be found to take off those Debts and Anticipations, and to supply that Diminution of the Customs which make it much Narrower then it was.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

There are so many Things to do, and so little Time to do them in, that there ought not to be one Minute lost. The Season of the Year is not yet so far advanced as to make it too Late to Set out a Fleet this Summer, for most of the Preparations are ready if we go about it with that Diligence which is requisite. And therefore it doth infinitely Import us All to Husband Time.

The

The Best way of doing this will be, to Avoid all long and tedious Consultations, which sometimes do as much Harm as ill Resolutions, And above all to take heed of such Questions and Debates as tend to raise Heat, or may create any kind of Disturbance. Nor does any thing in the World so much contribute to Dispatch as a Quiet and Orderly proceeding, For they who are in Haste, and attempt to do all their Business at once, most commonly hinder themselves from bringing any thing to Perfection.

You have now an Opportunity of doing Great things for the King and Kingdom, And it deserves your utmost Care to make a right use of it, For 'tis not in the power of a Parliament to recover a Lost Opportunity, Or to restore themselves again to the same Circumstances, or the same Condition which they had once a Power to have improv'd.

Would you Secure Religion at Home, and Strengthen it from abroad by uniting the Interests of all the Protestants in *Europe*? This is the Time.

Would you let the Christian World see the King in a Condition able to protect those who shall Adhere to Him, or Depend upon Him? This is the Time.

Would you Extinguish all our Fears and Jealousies? Would you lay aside all private Animosities, and give them up to the Quiet and Repose of the Publique? This is the Time.

Would you lay the Foundations of a Lasting Peace, and Secure the Church and State against all the future Machinations of our Enemies? This is the time.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

The present Face of Things, and the State wherein We now are, is so well known and understood

derstood abroad, That the whole World is in Great Expectation of those Resolutions which shall be taken here, The Results of this Councel seem to be Decisive of the Fate of these Kingdoms for many Ages, and are like to Determine Us, either to Happiness or Misery of a very long Duration.

We use to say, and say truly, That the King when Seated in Parliament is then in the fulness of His Majesty and Power, and shines forth with the Brightest Luster: Let no Exhalations from beneath Darken or Obscure it.

Foreign Nations say, and say truly, That a King of *England* in Conjunction with His Parliament is as Great and Dreadful a Prince as any in *Europe*: Shew them the Sight they are afraid of, and since they have laid it down for a Maxime in their Politiques, That *England* can never be destroyed but by it Self, and that 'tis in vain to make any Attempt upon this Nation, until they be in some great Disorder and Confusion among themselves, Make the Ambitious Despair betimes, and Establish so perfect an Intelligence between all the Parts of this Great Body, that there may be but one Heart and one Soul among Us.

And let us All pray That He who hath once more miraculously Delivered the King, The Church, and The State, would be pleased still to continue His Divine Protection; and give us Thankful and Obedient Hearts. And when We have offer'd up those Hearts to God, Let us in the next place Offer them again to the King, and lay them down at the footstool of His Throne, That so the King may see Himself Safe in your Counsels, Rich in your Affections,

Victori-

Victorious by your Arms, and Rais'd to ſuch a Height by your Loyalty and Courage, That you may have the Honour of making Him the Greateſt King, and He the Glory of making you the Happieſt People.

I have but one thing more in Command, and that is to the Gentlemen of the Houſe of Commons, That they proceed immediately to the choice of a Speaker, whom His Majeſty will expect to be preſented to Him here at three of the Clock to morrow in the Afternoon.

FINIS.